BIA Rocky Mountain Region Wind River Agency Forestry and Fire Management 2020

Wind River Agency Aviation Management Plan

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Purpose:

This plan establishes general operational procedural policy for aviation activities supporting land management and wildfire management programs within the Wind River Indian Reservation.

Objectives:

The goal of this aviation management plan is to:

- Inform users of organizational structures, policies and procedures, relevant to aviation activities.
- Foster safe and efficient aircraft usage to meet program objectives.
- Guide users in the appropriate procedures for requesting flight services.

I. Roles and Responsibilities

Each management position has varying degrees of responsibility and authority related to the aviation program at the Wind River Agency. Policy, direction, contracting, budgetary, safety and policy compliance roles are performed by the Bureau of Indian Affairs and the DOI-Office of Aviation Services (DOI-OAS). The Superintendent for the Wind River Agency (WRA) has the overall responsibility and authorities for bureau aviation operations within Wind River Indian Reservation. The Wind River Agency Superintendent has delegated aviation authorities to different management personnel, with varying responsibilities.

A. Agency Superintendents:

- 1. Plan and execute aviation activities within Wind River Indian Reservation;
- Designate an Agency Aviation Officer at locations with exclusive-use aircraft
 contracts. Designate a Collateral Duty Agency Aviation Officer at locations with
 exclusive use aircraft contracts. At locations without exclusive-use aircraft
 contracts, Superintendents may designate a Collateral Duty Agency Aviation
 Officer if they feel management and oversight of their local aviation activities
 requires one; and
- 3. Appoint an Aviation Project Manager to serve as the on-site aircraft manager for special-use aviation projects within Wind River Indian Reservation.

B. Collateral Duty Agency Aviation Officers:

1. Serve as the primary point of contact for the Interregional Aviation Manager (IRAM) and the Regional Aviation Manager (RAM);

- 2. Serve as the primary point of contact for Agency employees with questions regarding aviation operations. Refer aviation program issues and questions, which cannot be dealt with locally to the RAM or IRAM;
- 3. Advise the RAM and IRAM of agency training, operations or safety issues needing attention;
- 4. Coordinate with the RAM and IRAM to ensure agency aviation program needs are being met;
- 5. Maintain a current set of aviation handbooks and manuals to help ensure safe and efficient operation;
- 6. Attend both a DOI Aviation Management Seminar and a COR training course during the first year of their appointment and, at a minimum, once every three years thereafter.

C. Aviation Project Managers:

- 1. Ensure that special-use aviation project are afforded proper oversight and are conducted in compliance with DOI and Indian Affairs policy; and
- 2. Manage end product aircraft contracts at the agency involving various activities such as seeding operations and animal control efforts.

D. Exclusive-Use Aircraft Managers:

- 1. Ensure that aviation activities comply with DOI and Indian Affairs policy in all aspects of operations;
- 2. May serve as a Project Inspector (PI) on an aircraft contract.
- 3. Coordinate management of the aircraft with the AAO, RAM or IRAM.
- 4. Maintain a current set of aviation handbooks and manuals to ensure safe and efficient operations. Also, at locations with particular aviation activities such a helitack or retardant base operations, maintain additional guidance materials, which are listed in *Indian Affairs Manual part 57*, *1.6C*.
- 5. Maintain experience and training qualifications standards required in adopted Interagency Aviation Handbooks and Guides.

E. Flight Managers:

6. Ensure that the aircraft and pilot are carded for the type of flight to be made;

- Ensure that personal protective equipment (PPE) is used when required, training requirements for passengers or air crew members are met when required (e.g. special use) and that appropriate arrangements have been made for flight following; and
- 8. Ensure that the payment document for a flight is correctly processed.

II. Exclusive-Use Aircraft

A BIA National contract is an exclusive-use helicopter contract for 100 days. The helicopter is contracted mainly for Initial attack of wildfire, detection and suppression activities. Currently, the helicopter contracts begins at the middle of June and ends in late September. Two exclusive use helicopters and crews are available to the Wind River Agency for suppression activities, located in Billings, MT and Crow Agency, MT.

A. Availability for Non-Fire Projects

Exclusive-use aircraft can be available for non-fire projects, providing the aircraft is not needed for its contracted purpose, i.e. fire support. Usage of exclusive-use fire aircraft for non-fire project work will be short-term and if a request for fire support is received the aircraft will break free from the non-fire project.

Flight time and any other costs for field support will be charged to the project. When using exclusive-use aircraft for project work the daily availability costs will not be charged to the project.

III. Administration

A. General

Flights on scheduled commercial airlines (Part 121, 135) are arranged through the Concur Government Edition (CGE) travel system. Individuals will make their own arrangements with the Concur (CGE) travel system.

B. Aircraft Contracts

DOI-OAS will perform all contracting services for the Bureau of Indian Affairs-Wind River Agency.

C. DOI ON CALL SMALL HELICOPTERS SOLICITATION NUMBER D13PS00028

B1 Scope of Contract

B1.1 The purpose of this contract is to obtain fully Contractor operated and maintained on call (OC) small helicopter flight services to transport personnel and/or cargo in support of Government natural resource missions in the conterminous 48 States. Contractor services include provisions of a minimum of one helicopter,

personnel, fuel servicing vehicle, fuel, and all other associated equipment, as prescribed in this solicitation and/or offered by the Contractor and accepted by the Government. Missions will include, but are not limited to, interagency fire management program support such as wildland fire suppression, fire monitoring, initial attack, prescribed fire and aerial ignition, rehabilitation seeding, search and rescue, law enforcement limited to non-threatening surveillance and other administrative and related resource activities. The Government will direct aircraft to support its missions and objectives.

D. Aircraft Rentals Agreements (ARA) (Signed after Nov 2011)

B1 Scope of Agreement

B1.1 The intent of this Aircraft Rental Agreement (ARA) with the U.S. Department of the Interior Aviation Management (DOI AM) is to obtain fully Contractor operated and maintained flight services (small helicopter and fixed wing airplane) in support of Government natural resource missions. Missions may include law enforcement activities at various risk levels. Normal operations include point-to-point transportation and high reconnaissance flights. High reconnaissance is conducted above 500 feet AGL and does not include any type of precise maneuvering or specialized equipment. Special use or unique operational considerations may be requested. Operations involving aircraft in support of Government programs that require deviation from normal operating procedures, special pilot qualifications or techniques, or special aircraft requirements may necessitate additional approval procedures. Examples are low-level, helicopter external loads, etc., as identified in the supplements. This agreement must NOT be utilized to obtain direct fire suppression aircraft and tactical fire support aircraft. The Government will direct aircraft to support its missions and objectives.

E. Aircraft and Pilot Qualification

Agency personnel (all federal employees) will use only aircraft and pilots that have been inspected by DOI-OAS or USFS inspectors and certified for specific mission types. The aircraft must have a current Aircraft Data Card onboard and the pilot must have a current Pilot Card. Cooperator aircraft and pilots that do not have the appropriate approvals may acquire approvals through a request to DOI-OAS. A significant amount of time may be needed to make the arrangements. It is the flight manager/ chief of party or any passengers' responsibility to confirm that the aircraft and pilot have current qualification cards for the mission.

F. Cooperator Aircraft

Use of State, local government, National Guard, Military and private aircraft will require prior approval from the Agency Aviation Officer and Agency Superintendent, who will arrange for concurrence from the IRAM. BIA employees who will be passengers during special use mission flights on Cooperators aircraft are required to use all the appropriate personal protective equipment. Flight following standards must be adhered to, and DOI-OAS pilots/aircraft cards are required. 351 DM 4.3 and 4.4

G. Administrative Flights

Small airplanes may be used to transport personnel to meetings, administrative activities or training sessions when it is the most cost-effective mode of transportation. These flights will be requested through the AAO. US Government owned aircraft could be used if it is the most cost-effective mode and the aircraft is certificated for civil aircraft use. All flights with Senior Executive Services (SES) employees, members of their families and non federal employees or volunteer travelers will have to comply with procedures outlined in OAS OPM 97-7 and OMB Circular A-126.

H. Cost Analysis

All non-emergency flights must have a cost analysis conducted before any aircraft is hired. The flight requestor will coordinate with the AAO for assistance in preparing the analysis. Form OAS-110 or equivalent is to be used.

I. Flight Invoices

Aircraft Use Report (form, OAS23e) will be the only acceptable invoice to use when recording payment for any flight services obtained through contracts or rental agreements. The aircraft vendor will submit their copy of the invoice for payment. The aircraft vender will retain the 2 copies of the OAS-23e (1 copy will be forwarded to OAS and 1 copy is vender receipt). A copy of the OAS-23e will be given to the AAO, which will be stored to a minimum of 2 years. Each flight manager should retain a photocopy of the flight invoices for his or her self.

J. Daily Cost Summaries and Contract Diaries

Cost Summaries depicting costs by charge code will be produced each day an aircraft is used. A yearend activity report will be submitted to the AAO. The report will indicate the following information: accumulated flight time, number of passengers, cargo internal and external, gallons of water dropped, and cost by charge code. The AAO will be the collection point.

Contract Daily Diaries will be kept for all aircraft used, exclusive use or rental. Form OAS-137 or equivalent will be used for contracted aircraft. Entrees on the daily dairies indicating safety issues or contract performance issues should be shared with the AAO. Rental/CWN: a copy of the pre-use inspection, flight invoices, dairies, CWN Aircraft Closeout form, load calculations, project safety plan and any SAFECOM's will be filed with the AAO.

K. Documentation and Records

The manager or AAO will maintain records for a minimum of 2 years or for the duration of the exclusive use contract.

Documentation and Records include copies of: rental pre-use inspections, flight invoices, flight requests, special use aviation project plans, daily diaries, turbine engine power assurance checks, helicopter load calculations, close-out forms and SAFECOM's.

L. Aviation Plans

This plan will be updated by May 1, 2019.

IV. AVIATION USE STANDARDS

A. General Use Flight

A general use flight is non-mission type of flying, airport to airport, as a means of transportation. Requirements: (1) Approved Aircraft Flight Request, (2) DOI-OAS approved aircraft and pilot, (3) Designated chief of party/flight manager, (4) A flight plan/flight following filed with either dispatch or the FAA. The minimum requirement is an FAA flight plan, but check-ins with dispatch will be needed (see flight following section). (5) Brief the pilot about the flight plan and pilot will brief passengers about FAA required safety procedures.

B. Special Use Flight

Special Use Flight is all type of mission flying requiring specialized pilot skills and/or aircraft equipment. Typically, flight profiles are low level, below 500 feet Above Ground Level (AGL); take-off and landings at remote sites, external cargo operations, etc. Pilots will be approved by DOI-OAS or USFS by mission type, which is documented on their OAS or USFS Pilot Qualifications Card (OAS 30A – airplane, OAS 30B – helicopter, OAS 30C – airtanker). 351 DM 1.7

Passengers on special use flights must be considered essential to the mission. Employees engaged in special use flights must be qualified through required training.

C. Training

All persons engaged in managing or working with aircraft must meet DOI training and experience requirements. Training requirements can be found in 352 DM 2 or on the DOI-OAS training web site: http://iat.nifc.gov, IHOG Chapter 2, PMS 310-1, Aerial Ignition Guide. All helicopter managers must complete the S-372 Helicopter Managers Course and attend a Helicopter Manager Workshop every 2 years. BIA employees who use the Interagency Aviation Training system (see web address above) must complete the training modules and have re-current training every 3 years. Supervisors

who supervise employees who are engaged in special use flying must attend a DOI-OAS M-3 class – Aviation Management for Supervisors. IAT instructors must attend IAT training and re-currency classes. COR training and refresher every two years.

V. OPERATIONS

A. Flight Requests

Bureau flights will be requested and documented using the process defined in the Regional or Agency Aviation Plans. As a minimum flight management procedures will follow the *National Mobilization Guide Chapter 20, Flight Management Procedures*. The BLM *Aircraft Flight Request/Schedule (9400- 1A)* form is one example which may be used.

Any aircraft request for projects outside fire operations will have a flight request submitted to the AAO. Time required for processing a request and aircraft schedule depends on the complexity of the project. Most projects will need a minimum of 5 days notice. Projects that are complex will require more time to arrange. The following minimum information is required for a flight request:

(1) Project Name, (2) Project objectives, (3) Name of project contact/manager, (4) Project location, (5) Project date, (6) Management code, (7) Participants, (8) Known hazards (ground/air), (9) Will there be low level flights below 500 feet AGL. IHOG 3-25

B. Flight Plans and Flight Following

Flight Plan Requirements:

All flights will have a flight plan. The Pilot and/or Chief of Party shall file a flight plan. Three options for flight following aircraft flying within the Wind River Indian Reservation is available: (a) file an FAA flight plan; or (b) operate in accordance with an approved flight plan program; or (c) operate in accordance with a DOI-OAS approved vendor flight plan program specified in a DOI-OAS procurement document. 351 DM 1.4

Information required in a flight plan is:

- Route of flight
- Estimated time of arrival
- Number of passengers
- Hours of fuel onboard

All special use mission flights will use Forestry Dispatch to file agency flight plans.

Flight Following Requirements:

Cody Interagency Dispatch Center (CIDC) will monitor and flight follow all flights within Wind River Indian Reservation. All special use mission flights will have a flight following plan established. A Fire Dispatcher will be on duty at all times for flights conducted within Wind River Indian Reservation.

Soon after departure, the Pilot or Chief of Party will initiate flight following by reporting number of passengers onboard, destination, Estimated Time of Arrival (ETA) and hours of fuel onboard. Thereafter, radio Check-In is required every 15 minutes. Automated Flight Following will be monitored by CIDC.

Information relayed during Check-In includes: present position (latitude and longitude or known geographical location) and direction of travel/course (heading or bearing).

If an aircraft has to deviate from the direction of travel/course given in their last Check-In, another Check-In is required.

If an aircraft is to land/ shut down at a remote site, the Chief of Party or Pilot will provide the Fire Dispatch with an estimated amount of time planned on the ground. If the estimated time is insufficient and radio contact cannot be established from the ground the aircraft will have to be flown in order to make radio contact. Helicopter MGR or qualified helitack will attempt to contact Dispatch or other known resources locally.

Cody Interagency Dispatch Center (CIDC), VHF-FM National Flight Following Frequency, 168.650 TX/RX tone of 110.9, is for initial call-up, emergency, or backup.

Temporary Field Bases:

Temporary field bases may perform flight following if reliable radio or phone contact with Forestry Dispatch is available.

Radio operators' flight following aircraft in the field will immediately notify Cody Dispatch if 10 minutes has lapsed passed an aircrafts planned Check-In time.

Aircraft are considered Overdue when 30 minutes has lapsed since the last Check-In. Cody Dispatch will initiate protocols established in the Aviation Incident/ Accident Response Guide for the Wind River Agency.

C. Project Aviation Safety Plans (Special Use)

All WRA aviation projects require an approved project safety plan. Safety Plan will cover aviation activities for administrative flights and emergency (fire, call-whenneeded) aviation activities not deemed special use, see IV. Aviation Use, B. Special Use.

Special Use aviation activities requiring specialized training, planning and risk assessments due to; scale of the project, complexity of operations and elevated risk require a project specific safety plan. Safety plan approvals will vary depending on the degree of complexity and type of aircraft. At a minimum, the following topics should be addressed within aviation safety plans:

- Project name, objectives
- Maps-project area, hazards
- Military airspace
- Operational plan, logistics, specialized equipment
- Communications and flight following
- Participants and roles
- Risk Analysis
- Fiscal/contractual information
- Aviation Management or Line Officer Approvals
- Cost comparison and any justification for using other than least costs contractor

D. Approval for Project Aviation Plans/Flight Plans

Non-complex aviation safety plans - The AAO can approve special use aviation safety plans with the Superintendents concurrence.

Complex aviation safety plans- The AAO and IRAM should participate with plan preparation and assist with arranging for appropriate approvals.

E. Helicopter Load Calculations

Load calculations will be completed for all helicopter flights. Pilots are responsible for completing calculations. Acceptable load calculation form to use is the form OAS-67. The Chief of Party will review and sign each calculation or recommend additional calculations be done if environmental conditions, elevations or fuel load change significantly. See the IHOG for details.

F. Airplane Weight and Balance

Pilots will complete weight and balance calculations per the aircraft-operating manual. This is especially critical when the plane is being operated with a full load and/or the airstrip is short or rough, high elevation, or air temperatures are high.

G. Passenger Manifest

All flights will be manifested either by the Pilot or by the aircrew working with the aircraft. One copy goes to the Pilot and one stays with the operating base. Accurate weights and Pilot notification of the presence of hazardous cargo are essential.

H. Briefings: For pilots and passengers

The flight manager will assure that the pilot is briefed about the flight objectives and known aerial hazards. The flight manager will ensure that all passengers receive a safety briefing from the pilot.

I. Briefings: Visiting aircrews and new pilots

Pilots and Aircrews new to WRA will receive a briefing covering: operating procedures, communications, known flight hazards and maps, logistics, administration, aviation facilities and general fire suppression operation. The AAO is responsible for assuring that briefings are conducted.

Exceptions can be made by AAO on a case-by-case basis.

J. Hazard Maps

Each base for aviation operations will have a current hazard map of Wind River Indian Reservation. Hazards that should be identified are: military training routes, special use areas, wire crossing valleys/canyons or waterways, cell phone towers, airstrips, etc.

K. Hazardous Cargo Transportation

The Department of Interior has an exemption to transport some commonly used cargo classified as hazardous materials. These are liquid flammables/combustible fuels, oil, batteries/battery fluid, explosives, compressed gases and liquids, small ammunition, liquid nitrogen, aerial ignition devices. An Interagency Transportation of Hazardous Materials Handbook is required to be onboard the aircraft when transporting these materials. To be valid, the Handbook must have a current Exemption DOT-E 9198. Transport is limited to the scope of the Handbook and to the methods stated.

- Pilot Notification: The pilot will be informed of the types, amounts and location of hazardous cargo. Initial notification must be made in writing prior to the first flight and then subsequently verbally informing the pilot will suffice.
- Personnel who load or unload hazardous cargo on aircraft must complete training every 3 years, with a test being passed. The completed test will be filed with the AAO.
- Limiting exposure: Personnel should minimize the exposure to aircrews and passengers. 1.7, Interagency Aviation Transportation of Hazardous Material.

L. Temporary Flight Restrictions (TFR)

TFRs can be obtained for fire operations and some other emergency activities. All TFR requests to the FAA will be documented on a Resource Order and processed through the Rocky Mountain Coordination Center (RMCC). Generally, the person requesting the TFR will submit a resource order or information to CDC who will forward the request to RMCC. When TFRs are granted all aircraft are restricted from entry unless cleared by the on scene commander (e.g., Air Attack) or controlling dispatch. TFRs are not guarantees that uninvolved aircraft will not intrude. General aviation pilots must obtain a notice from the flight service station. Media aircraft may enter TFR zones if they have the operating radio frequency and are cleared by the controlling official (ATGS, Lead or ASM-1, Incident Commander). When a TFR is no longer needed the Incident Commander shall cancel the TFR through CDC.

M. Return to Service After Maintenance

Unscheduled maintenance will require a SAFECOM. If maintenance was for minor (scheduled inspections) or non-flight control/power plant problems, notification to DOI-OAS Maintenance Inspectors may not be required. If flight controls and/or power plant problems were involved then the DOI-OAS Maintenance Inspectors will be notified. The DOI-AM Maintenance Inspectors and Contracting Officer will be notified when any type of unscheduled maintenance occurs. Returning to service requires approval from the vendor's mechanic, or a person authorized under 14 CFR 43, and an entry has been made in the aircraft maintenance record. 351 DM 2.4A2,k, IHOG 14-8

N. Maintenance Test Flights and Ferry Flights

No agency personnel or cargo are allowed on aircraft while maintenance test flights are conducted. The aircraft flight time is non-revenue and the aircraft is considered unavailable. No agency personnel or cargo are allowed onboard aircraft when it is being ferried for maintenance if the aircraft has exceeded the 100-hour limit for the 100-hour inspection or if the aircraft has a maintenance deficiency requiring attention at a maintenance facility. Permission to remove the aircraft from the operating base is detailed in the specific aircraft contract, but typically permission is granted by the Contracting Officer Representative or Project Inspector. 351 DM 2.4A2,I,n, IHOG 14-7.A.3

O. Low Level Flights - Airplanes

Fire Operations:

Low-level flights in airplanes are only authorized for Aerial Supervision Modules (ASM-1), Lead Planes and Air Tankers

Non-fire projects:

Low level flights are approved only if the airplane and pilot are mission approved and all onboard personnel wear the required personal protective equipment outlined in the ALSE – Aviation Life Support Equipment Handbook. Typically, low-level flights in airplanes involve animal tracking or surveys. These projects are considered special use and will require a project aviation safety plan.

P. Helicopter Operations

All helicopter operations will be conducted within the scope of the Interagency Helicopter Operations Guide (IHOG). Aerial ignition operations will meet all requirements within the Interagency Aerial Ignition Guide.

VI. AVIATION SAFETY

Departmental direction is contained in 352 DM 1, IHOG chapter 9

A. Personal Protective Equipment

All persons onboard aircraft engaged in special use activities must wear the required PPE. The ALSE Handbook and chapter 9 of the IHOG provide all the necessary details. All persons onboard a helicopter responding to new fires (Initial Attack) will wear a flight helmet. The use of hardhats in lieu of a flight helmets is allowed only for fire operations and only if personnel are being transported from an established operating base to an established and managed helispot. All persons on aircraft operating over water must wear the appropriate personal floatation devices per the ALSE Handbook if an aircraft cannot glide to the shoreline if the engine were to stop running.

Contractor employees performing fueling of aircraft will comply with contract provisions concerning the use of PPE.

B. Risk Management

Flight Managers have the responsibility to practice proactive risk management and make operational decisions with the Pilot to minimize the potential for incidents or accidents. Risk assessments are a subjective analysis of physical hazards and operational procedures to arrive at a Go/ No-Go decision. Risk assessments support informed Go/ No-Go decisions which are the responsibility of line management. The Pilot retains final authority for No-Go decisions when safe operation of the aircraft is a factor. 352 DM 1.9A

From a risk management point of view, re-assessment of operations is needed if: environmental conditions are marginal, the project plan changes significantly, recurring mechanical problems or significant operational problems are being experienced.

Pushing weather and flying conditions, pilot skill or exceeding the aircraft capabilities due to pressures to complete a project are not acceptable risk management judgments.

All passengers have the right and obligation to address safety concerns with how a flight or operation is occurring.

Low level flight:

Prior to descending to a flight profile below 500 feet AGL, a high level recon of the project area is required to determine flight hazards and make mitigation plans. 352 DM 1.9D2

C. Aviation Information Mishap System (AIMS)

AIMS is an electronic data storage system for recording aviation mishap reporting. Important part for field users is the SAFECOM. SAFECOMs are for the reporting any condition, observance, act, maintenance problem, circumstance that has potential to cause aviation related mishaps. The SAFECOM form can be accessed through the DOI-OAS web site: www.oas.gov. The form is easy to complete and is self-explanatory. If there is no access to a computer with Internet connection a hard copy can be obtained from the AAO. 352 DM 1.10 A

D. Aviation Mishap Response Plan

Aviation bases (exclusive-use, call-when-needed, ARA) will maintain and post a current copy Aviation Incident/ Accident Response Guide for the Wind River Agency.

E. Base Crash Rescue Plan

Each helicopter base will have a Crash Rescue Plan for their base covering procedures for on base events and events away from base or in the field. *IHOG chapter 12*

References:

Major policy documents used to develop this plan are as follows:

Indian Affairs Manual - part 57, Department of Interior Departmental Manuals - 112 DM 12, 350 DM 1 through 353 DM 6

The Office of Aviation Management Directive of Operational Procedures Memorandum – OAS OPM, OAS aircraft contracting.

Interagency Handbooks and Guides:

Interagency Standards for Fire and Aviation Operations (Red Book) 2020 Interagency Helicopter Operation Guide
Aerial Ignition Guide,
Airspace Coordination Guide,
Air Tactical Supervision Guide
Air Tanker Base Operational Guide
Lead Plane Operations Guide,
Rappel Guide,
Single Engine Air Tanker Operations Guide,
Transportation of Hazardous Cargo,
National Mobilization Guide chapter 70, Region 2 Mobilization Guide
Military Operations Handbook,
Wild Horse and Burro Aviation Operations Guide.

All references can be located at the Forestry Warehouse - Fire Dispatch Office and AAO